



**Frederick County
Government
Frederick, Maryland**

News Release

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COUNTY IMPROVES INSTALLMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM

FREDERICK, MD – The Frederick Board of County Commissioners today approved changes to the Installment Purchase Program that will result in the preservation of more agricultural land in the county. Commissioner Billy Shreve brought the issue of maximizing the county's fiscal resources with respect to funding such land preservation easements to light and asked staff to work with the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board in recommending an alternative to the current system.

The Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board evaluated the valuation and ranking system for the Installment Purchase Program and staff conducted a series of workshops with the advisory board as well as with past applicants of the program.

The advisory board recommended to the county commissioners a change to the valuation system that reduces the price to \$8 per point and the base price to \$1,000 per acre. The board also recommended incorporating a competitive bidding aspect into the program.

In addition to changing the value, the advisory board recommended that applicants submit an "asking price" for the easement value they are willing to accept. Offers would be made solely on the bid ratio. The applicant that gives the largest percentage discount on their asking price (as compared to the easement value determined by the point system) would receive the first offer.

Board President Blaine Young commented, "We thank Commissioner Shreve for being forward thinking with our fiscal resources and we applaud the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board for this more aggressive plan with a competitive bidding process, where the final ranking is determined solely by the bid ratio. We join them in supporting this new plan to preserve more land in Frederick County."

Information about the program may be found by visiting www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/agpres. For more details, contact Anne Bradley at 301-600-1474 or via e-mail at abradley@frederickcountymd.gov.

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